

Message Text

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11
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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PGOV, PP
SUBJ: SIR JOHN GUISE ELECTED PNG GOVERNOR GENERAL

1. ON JULY 29 IN AN HOUR LONG ELECTION HELD IN CAMERA, THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY (SITTING AS THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY) VOTED DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER, SIR JOHN GUISE, TO BE THE GOVERNOR GENERAL-DESIGNATE. HIS APPOINTMENT IS YET TO BE APPROVED BY THE QUEEN, BUT THIS IS ONLY A FORMALITY.

2. OTHER CANDIDATES NOMINATED WERE TEI ABAL, LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION UNITED PARTY, AND SINAKE GIREGIRE, COUNTRY PARTY LEADER. MR. ABAL WAS DROPPED AFTER THE FIRST BALLOT WHEN VOTING WAS GUISE 45, GIREGIRE 25 AND ABAL 21. ON THE SECOND BALLOT GUISE DEFEATED GIREGIRE 53 TO 38.

3. PRESS ACCOUNT OF JULY 30 STATES THAT ELECTION WAS NOT A "RUBBER STAMP" AFFAIR AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN SO CONCERNED THAT THE POST MIGHT GO TO A NEW GUINEAN, THAT SECRET PLANS HAD BEEN MADE FOR THE CHIEF MINISTER TO STEP DOWN AS CHIEF MINISTER IN FAVOR OF SIR MAORI KIKI, LEAVING SOMARE AS DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER.

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4. COMMENT: POLOFF ATTENDED HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY IMMEDIATELY

PRIOR TO VOTE, AND GOVERNMENT REPS VIEW WAS THAT GUISE WOULD WIN BY 47 AND ABAL AND GIREGIRE WOULD POLL A TOTAL OF 43 VOTES.

5. GENERAL BELIEF NON-GOVT MHA'S WAS THAT GUISE WOULD SQUEEK THROUGH, BUT THAT HIS "FENCE SITTING" ON DECLARING HIS NOMINATION HAD COST HIM VOTES. POLOFF WAS TOLD ABAL WOULD NOT HAVE DECLARED HIS CANDIDACY IF GUISE HAD FIRMLY STATED HIS INTENTION EARLIER TO RUN, BUT THAT ABAL STILL HAD SOME CHANCE OF WINNING DUE TO HIS INFLUENCE WITH THE HIGHLAND MEMBERS. NO ONE THOUGHT GIREGIRE WAS A SERIOUS CONTENDER. GIREGIRE, AND MELANGE OF MHA'S IN COUNTRY PARTY WHICH HE LEADS, HAVE CONSISTENTLY BEEN UNDERRATED BY POLITICAL OBSERVERS HERE. THIS UNDOUBTEDLY BECAUSE GIREGIRE IS REGARDED AS LOUD-MOUTH KNOW-NOTHING WITH SERIOUS DRINKING PROBLEM AND IT IS BELIEVED THAT HIS ELECTORATE WANTS TO GET RID OF HIM. HIS DEPUTY, MICHAEL PONDROS, MHA FROM MANUS, ONCE OBSERVED THAT THE COUNTRY PARTY WOULD BE STRONGER IF IT HAD ONE LESS MEMBER (GIREGIRE). SOME TIME AGO HOWEVER GIREGIRE SMUGLY INFORMED POLOFF THAT HE HAD 30 VOTES IN THE HOUSE (SUPPORTIVE OF THE COUNTRY PARTY), AND THE SECRET VOTE FOR GOVERNOR GENERAL WOULD APPEAR TO CONFIRM THAT HE HAS 25 AT LEAST.

6. FURTHER EVIDENCE OF THE DECLINE OF THE UNITED PARTY WAS BROUGHT TO LIGHT BY ABAL'S POOR PERFORMANCE. AS THE SUPPOSEDLY MOST PROMINENT HIGHLANDER IN THE HOUSE IT WAS WIDELY ASSUMED THAT HIGHLAND BLOOD WAS THICKER THAN WATER AND THAT ABAL WOULD PROVE A SERIOUS CONTENDER.

7. AS AN INDICATION OF UNITED PARTY FRAILITY, WALLY LUSSICK, UNITED PARTY PLANNER, ADVISOR, AND MENTOR, INFORMED POLOFF THAT THE PARTY LEADERSHIP WOULD DISINTEGRATE IF ABAL BECAME GOVERNOR GENERAL. WE UNDERSTOOD THERE WAS NO ATTEMPT MADE TO BIND UNITED PARTY VOTES IN ADVANCE.

8. IF ABAL WON HE PLANNED TO HAVE LUSSICK ACCOMPANY HIM TO THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S OFFICE AS A PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT. SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD HAVE LEFT THE UNITED PARTY WITH NEITHER A HEAD, NOR AN ADMINISTRATIVE CAPABILITY, AND ITS MEMBERSHIP PROBABLY WOULD HAVE DRIFTED INTO OTHER PARTIES.

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9. LASTLY, AND DESPITE THE INFLUENCE OF PARTY MANEUVERING, IT MUST BE RECOGNIZED THAT MANY MEMBERS BELIEVED SINCE THE CHIEF MINISTER WAS NEW GUINEAN, THAT THE GOVERNOR GENERAL SHOULD BE PAPUAN. ALSO IN TERMS OF BACKGROUND, PRESENCE, DIGNITY, AND WESTERNIZATION DR. GUISE STOOD WELL ABOVE THE OTHER CONTENDERS. THESE FACTORS COMBINED WITH SOMARE SUPPORT FOR GUISE HELPED HIM CARRY THE DAY.

10. BIO ON GUISE FOLLOWS SEPTTEL.
EASTON

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